

# CHS dancers wow judges at RIC

## Pair of dance teams from high school win awards

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COVENTRY— A group of 19 Coventry High School Dance Team students competed at a competition at Rhode Island College over the weekend and received high awards and recognition in three performances, in addition to their overall score.

The Step Up 2 Dance Competition is part of a tour running from Maine to New York that “is aimed at nurturing the growth of dance schools and their students,” the website says. The goal-setting competition has been traveling the coast since 1988.

Coventry’s own talented



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See *DANCERS*, Page A-3

Coventry High School's Lyrical Dance Team, one of two competition teams.





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The Hip-Hop and Jazz Dance Team from Coventry High School, which received the "High Gold" award.

# Dancers score high marks

*Continued from Page A-1*

dancers competed in two groups, a Lyrical Team made up of Christina Schena, Emily Fusco, Alexa Ray, Samantha Schaller, Kylie Pimental, Kayla Jensen, Lea Fusco Madison Pimentel, Phoebe Lefrancois and Cheyenne Grice. The 10 dancers have been dancing for over 10 years and auditioned to perform with the lyrical team.

The second group that performed from Coventry High School — the Hip Hop and Jazz Team — includes Carlie Rivera, Jenna Larson, Laci Shull, Victoria Raposo, Mckayla Dove, Emily Fusco, Maddie Pimentel and Megan McGillvary.

All 19 performed in the hip hop and jazz performances.

The hip hop and jazz routine received "High Gold" among the nearly 20 other dance groups. The lyrical performance received the "Platinum" award which is the highest award dancers can win. A special judge's award of "Fierce Intensity" for all three numbers because of their intense

stage presence and precision was awarded to the entire CHS Dance Team.

Jessica Nietupski and Michaela Branning coach the 19 dancers and have been preparing for the Step Up 2 Dance Competition since last November. The students have diligently practiced twice a week for two hours each time, Nietupski explained.

"Competition is one of the things they look most forward to," Nietupski said. "There was one other high school dance team with the others being private dance studios. The girls did great."

She has been the head coach since 2012 and was a dancer on the CHS team when she was in high school in 2006. Upon graduation, she wanted to stay involved in the team and decided to help coach the dancers even throughout college.

The CHS Dance Team has an upcoming dance show in the school's auditorium on Saturday, April 18 at 7pm. Tickets are \$7 each and free for children with all proceeds benefitting the dance team. They will once again compete at a Providence College competition in May.